

In light of the World Health Organization's recent upgrade of the threat level associated with the outbreak of the H1N1 flu virus, the House Republican Conference has compiled the following information:

Summary of Facts and Developments:

- Given the current spread of the disease, officials at the World Health Organization and elsewhere have downplayed the potential effectiveness of travel or other border restrictions on limiting the scope of the outbreak.
- Officials from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) cannot yet explain why the flu strain appears more virulent in Mexico; CDC officials are on the ground in Mexico investigating and coordinating with local authorities, but warned that the virus could mutate as it spreads.
- The virus strain is new, and there is no vaccine for it; however, researchers at CDC and the Food and Drug Administration are working to develop virus reference strains, and coordinating with the National Institutes of Health to determine proper dosages and formulation. CDC officials have stated that a vaccine could first be available in September.
- As this flu strain has thus far been responsive to antiviral treatments, U.S. officials have begun releasing some of the 50 million doses of Tamiflu and Relenza from the strategic stockpile in order to treat potential cases when they appear. CDC officials have stated that local deployment of one quarter of the antiviral drug courses will be completed by this weekend.
- CDC officials have noted that the virus' incubation period appears to be 2-5 days-a similar length of time as the regular flu; however, some children may shed virus for 10 days or longer.
- The Administration has called its declaration of a public health emergency a precautionary and logistical move intended to facilitate the rapid deployment of supplies to respond to suspected cases; officials have urged caution, but not panic, in response to the outbreak.

- CDC and other officials have advised usual precautions to minimize the further spread of the disease: wash your hands, cover your mouth and hands when coughing or sneezing, discard used tissues, and stay home from work or school when feeling ill.
- Despite the disease's name, consumption of properly prepared pork products does not present a threat to human health.
- At yesterday's Member briefing, HHS Secretary Sebelius stated that as a result of prior preparations undertaken by the Bush Administration, "We are in the best shape that we've ever been to deal with this [outbreak.]"

Additional information and updates can be obtained through the [Centers for Disease Control](#) (CDC).

Governor Mitch Daniels' office has also a website with more specific information especially as it pertains to Indiana, which can be accessed [HERE](#) .